

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Thomas A. Fiore, Chairman (2004)
Maurice M. DePalo Vice-Chairman (2005)
Bruce R. Card, Clerk (2005)
Philip S. Hammond (2003)
John I. Lebeaux (2004)

MEETINGS

The Board of Selectmen meets in open session on Monday evenings at 7:00 PM in the Selectmen's Meeting Room in the Richard D. Carney Municipal Office Building. Meetings are generally held on alternate Mondays, though are occasionally scheduled at other times and places as circumstances dictate. At these meetings the Board conducts the general business of the Town of Shrewsbury pursuant to the Town Charter and the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The meeting schedule is available by visiting or contacting the Selectmen's Office (508-841-8504) or by accessing the Town's Internet Web Site (www.shrewsbury-ma.gov). The regular meetings are broadcast live on Shrewsbury Government Access Channel 35 and are replayed at other times for public convenience. The Board met forty-one times in open session in 2002.

The Board also holds special meetings and workshops. In February it held its Annual Legislative Meeting with Congressman James P. McGovern, State Senator Guy W. Glodis and State Representative Karyn E. Polito. This meeting allows the Board and other Town officials to discuss with the Town's legislators how various federal and state policies and programs affect the Town of Shrewsbury. This meeting continues to be an excellent forum for the exchange of ideas, and a wonderful opportunity to convey local concerns to our legislators.

The Board also regularly conducts workshop sessions at which it reviews particular issues with the Town Manager and appropriate Department Heads. In 2002 the Board held workshop sessions on Public Works Priorities and Financial Issues.

In addition to its regular meetings, the Board continues to tape a cable access television program, *Selectmen's Roundtable*, on a regular basis. The program's purpose is to allow the Board to present to the public issues concerning the Town in a more informal manner than at the regular meetings. This program is seen at various times on Shrewsbury Public Access Channel 35. New programs air every two weeks.

BOARD MEMBERS

At the Annual Town Election on May 6, 2002 Bruce R. Card and Maurice M. DePalo were each re-elected to the Board of Selectmen for a three-year term. At its first meeting after the election the Board organized as follows: Thomas A. Fiore, Chairman; Maurice M. DePalo, Vice-Chairman; Bruce R. Card, Clerk.

TOWN MANAGER

The Board conducted its Annual Evaluation of the Town Manager in January. Town Manager Daniel J. Morgado's overall performance was judged to be excellent to distinguished.

The Board characterized Mr. Morgado's management style as thoughtful and decisive in both routine and unexpected situations. He established a set of clear and concise priorities, making his decisions logically after careful analysis of each issue. Mr. Morgado continued to maintain the Town's strong and stable fiscal position by means of his constant discipline in financial matters.

The Board concluded that Mr. Morgado's relationship with the Board of Selectmen was positive and productive. He routinely sought out the Board's counsel and advice, and assisted Board members seeking deeper background on particular issues. He maintained his close adherence to the authority granted by the Town Charter both to his position and to that of the Board of Selectmen.

The Board found Mr. Morgado continued to serve as a strong leader and excellent motivator. His energetic management methods fostered a unified approach throughout Town government to achieve the goals set out by him and the Board.

The Board noted Mr. Morgado's positive efforts in the areas of personal and professional growth in the previous year. It cited several of his ongoing activities and also his attendance at the John F. Kennedy School of Government Leadership Program.

The Board of Selectmen would be terribly remiss if it did not recognize Assistant Town Manager Michael R. Hale for his dedicated and distinguished service to the community. Mr. Hale's presence in the Town Manager's Office greatly increases Town government's ability to do its business effectively and efficiently.

ACTIVITIES AND ISSUES

As the executive body of the Town, the Board of Selectmen oversees the policies of our municipal government. It conducts hearings as the Local Licensing Authority, acts as Appointing Authority, acts as both Road and Water Commissioners, and proposes legislation to the Town Meeting throughout the year. Items of particular note for the year 2002 are listed below.

Treasurer-Collector Appointment

In late December 2001 Treasurer-Collector Charles E. Patterson informed the Board of his intention to resign effective January 31, 2002 to accept a position in the private sector. The Board accepted his resignation with regret as he performed his duties for the Town at the highest level. The Board extends its sincere best wishes to him and thanks him for his many years of service.

Appointment of the Treasurer-Collector is the responsibility of the Board of Selectmen as set forth in Article 4-F of the Town's General By-Laws. From consultation with the Town's independent auditor, the Board learned that an Interim Treasurer-

Collector would need to be appointed if a permanent replacement could not immediately succeed Mr. Patterson. This interim appointment would create an additional set of significant auditing costs. As an alternative the Board entered into an agreement with Mr. Patterson and with Assistant Treasurer-Collector Mary E. Grillo. Rather than have the Town assume the expenses related to hire an Interim Treasurer-Collector, it was agreed that Mr. Patterson would continue the signatory duties of the position for a stipend and that Ms. Grillo would manage the day-to-day operations until a permanent appointment was made. This arrangement proved to be totally successful, and allowed the Town to avoid additional expenses.

The Board wishes to thank Mr. Patterson for his willingness to extend his service until a permanent replacement could assume the position, and to thank Assistant Treasurer-Collector Grillo who maintained the very high level at which the Treasurer-Collector's Office operates.

The Board advertised the position and received many applications. Semi-finalists were interviewed by the Board in executive session (as permitted by Mass. General Law Chapter 39, Section 23B) from which three finalists were selected. The Board then interviewed the three finalists in open session.

On February 12, 2002 the Board of Selectmen appointed Carolyn J. Marcotte as Treasurer-Collector by unanimous vote. Ms. Marcotte assumed her position on April 1, 2002. The Board wishes her a long and successful tenure.

The Board wishes to acknowledge the technical assistance provided it throughout the selection process by Assistant Town Manager Michael R. Hale. Mr. Hale was a most valuable resource to the Board in matters relating to the Town's financial operations and personnel practices.

Donahue Rowing Center Addition

In January the Board met with Barbara and Irving (Jim) Donahue who informed the Board of their desire to completely fund the costs of a four bay addition to the Donahue Rowing Center. The facility had been constructed in 1991 with the help of the Donahue's generosity and has been completely full since 1996.

Mr. and Mrs. Donahue had entered into an agreement with the Shrewsbury High School Alumni Association, a non-profit organization to satisfy the legal requirements to fund such a project and then convey it to the Town as a gift. The Donahues would transfer the funds to the Association, which would oversee the project and convey the completed addition to the Town.

The Board and the Alumni Association first needed to enter into a licensure agreement, as the addition would be built on Town property. The February 11, 2002 Special Town Meeting unanimously authorized the Board to enter into the agreement. With great appreciation to Mr. and Mrs. Donahue, the Board signed the agreement February 12, 2002.

After a very successful construction process, the Board accepted the completed addition to the Donahue Rowing Center on September 26, 2002. The facility is now the largest rowing center in the United States.

The Board is very appreciative of all the work done by the Building Committee: Edwin Coghlin, Chair; Ronald Sanguinet; Pamela Krause; Angela Snell; I. James Donahue, Jr.; Edward Holland; Michael Hale; Thomas Sullivan and by the Alumni Association to bring about this wonderful gift to the community.

There are no words that can properly express the Board's appreciation for yet another in a remarkable series of philanthropic acts by Barbara and Irving (Jim) Donahue for the benefit of this community.

On behalf of the people of the Town of Shrewsbury,

Thank you, Babs and Jim!

Allen Property Acquisition

On April 26, 2002 the Board of Selectmen received notice from representatives of the Allen family of their intention to sell two parcels of land totaling sixty acres on the eastern side of South Street between Routes 9 and 20 to AvalonBay Communities. Both parcels were substantially zoned for non-residential purposes.

The first parcel, comprised of forty-nine acres, was classified as agricultural land under Massachusetts General Law Chapter 61A which affords the landowner substantially reduced taxes as long as the property is maintained for agricultural purposes. The local municipality has the right of first refusal should the landowner wish to sell the land for non-agricultural purposes. AvalonBay entered into a purchase and sale agreement with the Allen family to buy the parcel for \$5.2 million.

The second parcel adjoined the first and provided frontage on Route 20. This eleven-acre parcel did not have the agricultural classification. AvalonBay and the Allen family agree to a purchase price of \$800,000 for this parcel, bringing the total purchase price for sixty acres to \$6 million. The Allen family representative informed the Board that if it exercised its right of first refusal on the agricultural parcel this second parcel was available to the Town for the same price as agreed to with AvalonBay.

AvalonBay proposed to construct three hundred units of rental housing on the property under provisions of Massachusetts General Law Chapter 40B which allows local zoning requirements to be overridden.

The Board of Selectmen was very concerned about the potential loss of this property for the business development that would create much needed improvement to the Town's non-residential tax base. Expanding the commercial-industrial tax base is absolutely essential if this community intends to maintain the high level of municipal services it provides.

The Board began an intensive investigation to determine if it wished to recommend that the Town purchase both parcels for non-residential development. M.G.L.

Chapter 61A gives the municipality a one hundred and twenty-day period to exercise its option, which would have set that date at August 23, 2002. The Board requested an extension of the option period to September 30, 2002. The additional time allowed the Board to schedule any necessary Special Town Meeting or Special Town Election in September rather than during the summer. The Allen family and AvalonBay Communities each graciously granted the extension.

The Board consulted with members of the Finance Committee, Planning Board, and Industrial Development Commission and heard reports from consultants hired for its assistance. The Board decided that it wished to propose the purchase of the property to a Special Town Meeting and to the voters in a Proposition 2-1/2 Debt Exclusion ballot question.

As Massachusetts General Law does not allow a municipality to borrow funds to purchase land and then develop that land for commercial-industrial use, the Board considered the creation of various legal entities that have been employed by other communities with the same goal. The Board decided that the most flexible option was to ask the Town Meeting to authorize the Board to petition the General Court to create an Economic Development and Industrial Corporation (EDIC) which would oversee the development of the project through its Board of Directors.

The September 9, 2002 Special Town Meeting approved proposals to create the EDIC, to purchase the property, and to amend the Zoning Bylaws and the Zoning Map establishing the parcel in the Office-Research district.

The voters approved the Debt Exclusion at the September 23, 2002 Special Town Election by a vote of 1,613 in favor and 199 opposed.

In order to begin planning the development options for the property while waiting for the General Court to act on the Home Rule proposal the Board created the EDIC Steering Committee. It is the Board's intent that the membership of the Steering Committee will become the EDIC Board of Directors as soon as the legislation is approved by the legislature and signed by the Governor.

The Board requested letters of interest from individuals seeking appointment to the EDIC. It received numerous applications, held fifteen interviews and on November 4, 2002 voted to appoint Christopher D. Boehm, Pat Convery, Alden Harris II, Hannah E. Kane, Christopher G. Mehne, Richard Ricker, and Michael E. Traynor as the EDIC Steering Committee. The Board was very pleased with the caliber of so many of the individuals seeking appointment. The Board hopes that many of the talented individuals who were not appointed to the EDIC will offer their service to the Town again in the future.

The purchase of the Allen property for non-residential development was a bold step by the Town to improve the commercial-industrial tax base for the public good. The Board is confident in the individuals it appointed to move the project forward in the most positive direction.

School Building Projects

The Town was involved with three school building projects of vastly different size and scope in 2002.

The largest building project in the history of the Town, the 280,000 square foot new Shrewsbury High School at 64 Holden Street opened to receive students September 3, 2002 as scheduled. It is an outstanding educational facility that will serve well for many decades and of which the community can be very proud.

At this writing there continues to be “punch list” of numerous items that still need attention and are being addressed.

The final cost of the project is undetermined at this time, as there remains items in dispute. The Board is pursuing various legal avenues to bring these matters to resolution. Principal areas of dispute include the substantial difference in the construction estimate of how much ledge would need to be removed from the actual quantity removed and a claim by the contractor seeking additional payment for latent conditions.

The conversion of the former High School at 45 Oak Street into a Middle School began in the fall of 2002. At this writing the project is in its very early stages. The new Middle School is scheduled to be available for the start of the school year in the fall of 2004.

The High School-Middle School Building Committee has managed both the Holden Street and the Oak Street projects. The Committee has overseen the creation of a beautiful, highly serviceable facility in the new High School. The Board wishes to again recognize the Committee for its many hours of productive work that has gone on for a period of years and will continue for several more.

The third project is the construction of an addition to the former North Shore School on Parker Road to expand classroom and office facilities for the Special Education program. Discussion of this project began in late 2001. The proposal was presented to the February 2002 Special Town Meeting. The Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee did not recommend the proposal to the Town Meeting and the Town Meeting defeated the proposal. The Board was concerned that the speed of the process did not allow consideration of possibly less costly options.

After a careful review process a substantially similar proposal was submitted to the May 20, 2002 Special Town Meeting for its consideration. The article was supported by majorities of the Board and the Finance Committee. The article was approved by the Town Meeting. The winning bid for the project was below the \$1.83 million appropriation. The project is on schedule for completion in the fall of 2003.

Water Issues

The Town has significant issues relating to both the public water supply and wastewater management.

In December 2001 the Massachusetts Drought Management Task Force declared a Drought Advisory for the entire state. In February 2002 the Task Force re-classified the Central Region of Massachusetts as an area under the more severe Drought Watch.

To protect the water supply the Board ordered several Mandatory Water Restrictions on outdoor watering use effective April 22, 2002. As the drought continued through the spring and summer, the Board found it necessary to ban the use of outdoor sprinklers in August.

The situation was then exacerbated by the rapidly decreasing yield from the Home Farm Well 6-1. Though it was previously hoped that the Town could delay shutting down the well until fall to take the steps necessary to improve its yield, Water Superintendent Robert Tozeski advised the Board in August that the process needed to proceed immediately. In order to take Home Farm 6-1 out of service it would be necessary to reduce the use of the municipal water supply by 20%. On August 20, 2002 the Board of Selectmen ordered a total ban on all outdoor watering.

Repairs to the well were successfully completed in early September, and the total outdoor ban was lifted on September 5, 2002.

The Board heard many thoughtful comments regarding the structure of the Water Restrictions Bylaw throughout the summer of 2002. The Board agrees that the Restriction Bylaw can be improved to more fairly control the use of outdoor water usage and plans to bring a revised Bylaw to the Town Meeting in the winter of 2003.

The Board wishes to acknowledge that though most residents have carefully followed whatever Water Restrictions are in effect at a given time, it was necessary to issue numerous citations in 2002. The level of public cooperation during the critical period in late summer when Home farm 6-1 was off-line was excellent however, and allowed the Town to avoid a crisis.

The Town continues to undertake a systematic upgrading of the water supply distribution system. Each year improvements are being made. A potential new water supply has been identified at the town owned former S.A.C. Property on Lake Street.

Before any new supply can receive the necessary permitting to be added to the system the Town is required by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection to practice much more rigorous conservation. The average daily gallons per day used by a Shrewsbury resident is ninety-one gallons. Differing state guidelines call for Shrewsbury's average per person usage to decrease to eighty gallons per day or as low as sixty-five gallons per day.

Regardless of any other steps taken, water conservation must be taken seriously by all residents! The Board of Selectmen, acting as Water Commissioners, the Town Meeting and the customers of the municipal water system must jointly take necessary actions to improve our water conservation practices.

In the area of wastewater management, the Town continues as a member of the Assabet River Consortium, a regional cooperative of the communities that discharge treated wastewater into the Assabet River. The Consortium was established to create the most cost-effective methods to improve the water quality in the Assabet River as mandated by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Affairs and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. In June the Board heard the Phase II Report of the ongoing study. There seems to be much support at the regulatory level that some of the

treated wastewater should be pumped into the ground to recharge the aquifer rather than being discharged into the river. Some regulatory bodies have suggested that 100% of the treated wastewater go back into the ground! The Board heard that depending on exactly what practices the municipalities are called on to make that rates to Shrewsbury sewer system customers could increase by as much as 300%.

As the project moves into Phase III of the study the Board has become very concerned by conflicting positions taken by the state and federal regulatory agencies overseeing the project. There has also been strong indication that these agencies wish to expand the study at additional cost to the communities.

The Board met jointly with the Westborough Board of Selectmen and the Westborough Treatment Plant Board (whose membership is comprised of three residents from each of the two communities) in November to discuss these issues. At that meeting the three bodies concurred that Phase III should not proceed until a scope of work is set that meets the initial objective and falls within the established budget.

Shrewsbury's Two Hundred Seventy-Fifth Anniversary

2002 was a year to celebrate the Town's Anniversary. To commemorate the Town's incorporation on December 15, 1727, a variety of events were held throughout the year under the direction of the 275th Anniversary Committee. The high point of the celebration was the Spirit of Shrewsbury Fall Festival held at the end of September. This annual event, organized by The Spirit of Shrewsbury Fall Festival Committee, has continued to grow in attendance and support each year.

The Board of Selectmen wishes to acknowledge the fine work done by so many volunteers to provide the means to celebrate our community's history.

CLOSING

The year 2002 was a successful one for the Town of Shrewsbury. The employees of the Town, the Department Heads, supervisors, and line personnel continue to efficiently deliver a very high level of services to the community. The volunteer efforts of the various boards, committees, and commissions maintain the will of the townspeople. Everyone should be grateful for all these individuals' willingness to offer their time and service to improve the community. Please refer to their individual reports for detailed information about their activities.

The Board would be remiss if it did not take note of the numerous donations and gifts made to the Town by many of its residents and local businesses. These gifts and donations add to the quality of life of every member of this community. The Board wishes to extend its sincere gratitude on behalf of the Town to each and every resident and business that was willing to do something extra to make Shrewsbury a better place to live and work.

The Board constantly depends on the staff of the combined Offices of the Board of Selectmen and the Town Manager so that it may properly discharge its duties and responsibilities. Along with Mr. Morgado and Mr. Hale, Janice McCoy, secretary to the

Board of Selectmen and Paula Brady, secretary to the Town Manager continue to provide the highest level of support.

Respectfully Submitted,
Board of Selectmen